

A
LETTER
TO A
FRIEND
CONCERNING
~~Mr. Tolson~~
Late BOOK
OF
Church-Government.

*Obsequium Amicos
Veritas Odium parit.*

LONDON, Printed for John
BENTLEY, at the Angel in the Passy.



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IT needs not be such a Matter of Wonder, that our Churches fall under so great Decays, as of late they have done; Considering, 1. The Restlessness of the Great Enemy in his professed Enmity and Opposition to Christ and his Interest in the World. 2. If you consider, that Churches, tho' Bodies Politick of a Spiritual Nature, yet are but sublunary; and therefore dwelling, as to their Militant State, in Fleehly Tabernacles, which as Grass must pass away, and all their Religious Glory out of this World, as Flower of Grass. And hence, 3ly. All Churches have their Inchoation, Augmentation, State and Declination; and tho' Trees of God's own Planting, yet not such as are for Continuance to Perpetuity here: It was not so with the Church of the Jews, nor with the Churches of the New Testament. It stands upon Record in Scripture, how greatly the Churches of Asia declined within the first Age after Christ, and now where are they? Yea, how many Ages past had they their Exit. 4. The most Forward,

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Lively and Zealous Professors, have been those that as Confessors, have passed thro' the Fiery Trial of Persecution, and knowing by Experience the Preciousness of the Word and Ordinances of Christ, do mightily prize and value a Time of Peace and Liberty after such Storms, and visibly profit thereby at least for a while; thus it was with the Churches after *Saul's* Persecution, *Acts* 9. 31. who yet afterward fall under the great Rebukes of Christ for their Marvelous Declinations and Decays. 5. Visible Churches at the best, are but mixt Bodies of Sincere and Hypocritical Professors, and the worst part are usually increasing most, 'till at last it carries the Majority by far, and the Denomination of the whole, and the Denunciation of Christ falls upon them, to remove their Candlestick. 6. Visible Churches are most apt to corrupt under a Day of Prosperity, for by the Continuance thereof, 1. They grow exceeding Worldly, looking upon the Charges of Ordinances their great Burden; and therefore are for the Encrease of their Number upon any Terms, so they may get in Rich Members to facilitate their Charge who often are most dangerous to the Spiritual State and standing of Churches, by their ill Examplss and scandalous Walking connived still at, because of their Pelf or Greatness. 2. By the Day of Peace they grow Formal and Dead under a Round of Ordinances, that they move as the Sluggard, or like a Door upon the Hinges; they are neither hot nor cold, not so cold as to endure without Ordinances, but yet under

der them have no Life or Zeal for Christ : No Wonder, if Christ spue such Churches out of his Mouth at last. 3. They grow Exceeding Proud, Ungovernable, they will kick and wince at the Yoke of Christ's Government ; Christ hath set Rulers in his Church, but they say, *Who is Lord over us ?* Such a Spirit was prevailing in the Church of *Corinth*, and was rebuked by the Apostle ; 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. *Now ye are full, ye have reigned as Kings without us :* What Sence can this have, but to shew the Insolent Behaviour of the Fraternity, towards the Rule and Government set in the Church. What Church Concord can there be between Christ and Belial (Men that will not be under the Yoke of Christ's instituted Government) 2 *Cor.* 6. 15. that Place doth plainly describe what Visible Churches and Members ought to be, and what they ought not to be. Hence many Church Members fall into the Catalogue, or rather Black List, which the Apostle gives us of the Backsliding Professors of the last Days, 2 *Tim.* 3. 4. they are *μεγαλυνται υπερηφανες*, *Precipantes & inflati*, Heady, and blown up. 7. They grow in process of Time under a Gospel Ministry, and Ordinances constantly dispensed, to have it and them in Contempt ; they are carnally fine mouthed, they like *The Noise and Air of a Sermon* ; Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32. better than the Substance of it, the weightiest Truth is of little Weight ; they look more upon the Man, than the Message he brings from God. This is the Carnal Spirit, which the Apostle chargeth the [*Corinthians* with, 1 *Cor.* 3. Hence

they get that pertinacious and destructive Disease of the Itch in their Ears, which they infect ne another with, multiplying Teachers to themselves; but if any happen to rub harder than ordinary, either in Preaching or Praying, they will make it Matter of Reproach and Contempt, instead of yielding that *Capitvity* and Subjection to the *Word of God*; which would work Humiliation and Reformation, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, — 6. Hence by a Spiritual Judgment for nauseating the Simplicity of the Gospel of Christ, from which the Serpent hath by his Subtilty beguiled them, and corrupted their Minds, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. they fall into a Spirit of Slumber and deep Sleep, whereby they call Edification the gratifying their Lusts, and flattering their Evil Ways: He is no Edifying Preacher, that doth not this, but as for themselves, they have the *Name of a Church*; yea, and they are encreased with *Spiritual Goods*, and have need of nothing; yea, they say. *They are innocent*: Surely his Anger shall turn from me, but God said to that Church, *behold I will plead with thee, because thou hast said I have not sinned*; Jer. 2. Lastly, I shall give you a Concluding Answer to this Enquiry, There are two Reasons of a Church's dangerous Decay, if not Ruine; mentioned by the Apostle Paul, in his Farewel Discourse with the Elders of *Ephesus*, which he forewarns them of, *Acts* 20. 29, 30. 1. *The Entrance of grievous Wolves into the Church, not sparing the Flock*; these I take to be false Teachers, that enter in Sheeps Cloathing and corrupt the

the Church with false Doctrine. 2. The other is, *Some of themselves shall start up to make Faction of the Church, speaking perverse things, &c.* very well rendered to the Life of the Word; *ἀνεντις τῶν παλαιῶν μαθητῶν*, to rend off Disciples to themselves. The *Arab.* hath it, *That they may allure and deceive Disciples to themselves:* Such as both these Church Spoilers, our Times have abundant Experience of. The latter, if not a Complication of both, I am now concerned with; Men that arise in a Church blown up with their Worldly Riches, or Others with their Talkative Tongues, and Pernicious Wits shall speak such perverse Things, through their Pride and Ignorance, that they make Factions in the Church, rending off Disciples after them, whereby such a Root of Schism and Bitterness ariseth and worketh that will hardly, if ever, be eradicated.

Such a Root hath lately sprung up, as you tell me, in a Church of Christ; by Means of One who hardly ever spake but *heresies* all his Days; but at last, under the specious Pretence of Vindicating Congregational Churches, hath laid Gun-powder under not only that Church, of which he was a Leading Member, but under others also; asserting and making it his Design to prove, that a Visible Congregational Church is only a Democracy, or rather an Anarchy, under the Government of the Fraternity, and tho' it be Organized with Elders, yet that those Elders neither teaching, nor otherwise have any Ruling Power in the Church. 1. *I shall state*

the Question. 2. Prove what Part of it I assert.
 3. Answer our Military Adversary C. B. and if you Object, it's not fair to answer a Dead Man's Book, and give him what his Works deserve; I utterly deny the Assertion, if any Man writes and prints to the World, he throws down his Gantlet as a Challenge to any that will take it up whether he lives or dies; *Litera scripta manet*, whatever becomes of the Man; and as it remains, if it be of a pernicious Nature, it is still doing Mischief: Therefore it becomes such as have a Love to Truth, to vindicate it against all such malignant Opposers thereof, that the Ages to come may not condemn the Oscitancy and Sloathfulness, and Man-pleasing Humour of our Age; that such and such a Truth was therein run down and trampled upon, but none lifted up a Hand for its Defence.

1. To state the Question.

1. Whereas some deny any Ruling Non-preaching Elder in a Church of Christ: to prove, that there is such an Institution of Christ, shall not be the Subject of this Discourse.

2. Others hold, that there are such Ruling Elders, and that all the Rule and Government of the Church belongs to them, and not to the Teaching Elders.

3. Others hold, that Pastor, Teacher, and Non-Preaching Elders do by Christ's Institution belong to a Church, and that they are all Ruling Elders in the Church.

4. Others hold, there's no Difference between Pastor and Teacher, therefore instead of one make

make two, and cut the Partnership between them. Some of these have turn'd Christ's Order into Confusion, by their making bold with his Institutions, modelling them not by Rule but Interest, according to their own Minds and Measures.

That the Querist or the Reader may not be confounded I state it thus, *Whether a Pastor or a Teaching Elder in a particular Congregation, hath Authority Rule and Government there, Virtute Officij, by Vertue of his Office?* This Question I shall defend in the Affirmative: before I come to the Argument. I lay down a few Propositions to prevent Mistakes.

1. That as the Church standing, so the Government thereof is an Institution of Christ, he hath set and placed such in a Church, whom he hath appointed to Rule and Govern it; *Eph. 4.*

2. That Ecclesiastical Rule and Government is specifically distinct from Civil, and is by no Means to be derived from it, or mingled with it.

3. The Ecclesiastical Rule is not Despotick or Arbitrary, but that which is according to the Revealed Mind and Will of Christ, and with the Knowledge and Consent of the Church, and therefore such a Government as is consistent with a free Corporation.

4. This Government is not coined by the People, tho' they are by Christ's Institution to choose them that shall exercise it; it is framed and appointed by Christ, as the Church is Christ's Church, so the Ministry is Christ's, for the

the Good of the Church: Hence all Government is dispensed in the Name of Christ, none in the Church's Name; for if the Church-Fraternity act in Christ's Name in their Relation to one another, then the Elders act in Christ's Name, in the Relation they stand in to the Church.

5. Hence this Government is Subordinate to Christ, and derived from Christ. 2. It's Executive not Legislative. 3. It's Regular, according to the Rules and Institutions of the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. The End of it is the Glory of God in the Church, both by them that rule, and them that obey, in all Things both of Faith and Order.

And now, Sir, I come to my Arguments, To prove that the Teaching Elder or Elders, have Rule and Government in a Church of Christ.

Argu. 1. From *Acts 20. 28.* They that God had committed the stated Care and Oversight of his Church to, are Rulers and Governors thereof; but God hath committed the Care and Oversight of a Church to the Elders thereof by this Text. For the Major, that He or they that feed the Flock, are such as feed by the Word and Seals; now Oversight excludes Equality, for the Overseer is not equal to the Overseen in that respect. 2d. It excludes Inferiority, he that oversees other Men cannot be in that respect inferior to them, and their meer Servant. 3. Overseeing is not a meer idle Looking on, but it lieth in Guiding, Directing and Governing Persons and Actions overseen; an Overseer without Command is but a

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Seer, a Looker on, a Spectator ; any Man that comes into the Lord Mayor's Court is a Spectator or Seer, but it's the Lord Mayor is the Overseer. that hath the chief Command there, and his Oversight is by way of Command, in Precept or Prohibition. Their Authority over the Church is here expressed, in that it's said, the Holy Ghost hath set them as Overseers in the Church ; their Office, Work and Great Business is to take Care to *Rule well*. The several *Eastern* Versions carry it so, the *Syriac* is *Constituit vos*, hath appointed, or constituted, or rais'd you into Office to Rule and Govern ; the same Word which is used *Psal.* 2. 6. for Setting *Christ on his Hill of Zion* ; and the *Arab.* useth the same, here it useth *Gaal*, which is *Constituere unum super alium* ; so the *Ethiop.* The *Manns*, or Business in particular of Oversight, is here expressed by *μαρτυρεω*, which is to *Shepherdize*, to *Feed* and *Govern* as a *Shepherd* doth ; to *Feed* so as to *Govern*, and *Govern* so as to *Feed* : Here are both Keys exprest in this Word, the Key of Knowledge to feed with Knowledge, as *Jer.* 3. 15. where the same Word is used by the *LXX.* and the rest of the Versions ; which is the Dispensation of the Word and Seals, for the feeding their Faith and Knowledge of Christ that they grow in Grace, but can this Feeding be without Rule and Government ? and indeed those Keys of Knowledge and Government cannot be parted in Church Administrations ; for they all require the *Obedience of Faith, and Subjection to the Gospel of Christ*, brought and administered

ministred to the Church in the Name of Christ; feeding *מקדונו*, is by way of Government as well as teaching, and in Teaching it self. The Vulgar renders *מקדונו*, *Regere*, and it's not misrendred so, but carries the main Import of the Word; they are required so to Rule, as to take heed to the Flock, that it be also fed with Knowledge and Understanding: All the *Eastern* Versions follow the Text exactly, using the Word that is appropriated to a Shepherd's managing a Flock of Sheep, as his Charge and Care committed to him, which is to *Feed* and *Rule*. It will be said, where is *מקדונו*, and *מקדונו* used for Govern. See it expresse by *Psal.* 78. 71. who was a Type of Christ in the Days of the Gospel, *Ezek.* 34. 23. Now I think the *Major* carrying so great Demonstration for the Text, the *Minor* must needs be without Dispute.

Arg. 2. They that are expressly commanded to obey, and be subject to such as are set in Ministerial Office over them, have such constituted Rulers and Governors; but the Members of Churches have such set over them, to whom they are bound to give Obedience, and to submit to in the Lord. *Heb.* 13. 17. The *Major* is plain and without Dispute, where ever there is Obedience there is a Rule and Government, *Posito Relato ponitur Correlatum*, there cannot be a Command of Christ to some to Obey, but there must be a Commission of Christ to others to Rule and Govern, and that it is so, is literally evident by this Text, and must be granted by all but perverse Minds; such as *Don Quickset*, who will
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needs fight with a Windmill; we shall see by and by how well he approves himself in this Encounter: But it will be alledged by some, the Elders must needs be here understood to be not Teaching, but only Non-teaching Elders: The Word used is *Governors*, they are described to be such as watch, *ἀγρυπνῶντες*, such as wake much and break their Sleep in studying Truths, that may be most profitable to the Souls of the People, such as good Shepherds should feed them with, of which they must give an Account to their Lord and Master, what Doctrine they have preached, and how the People have received it, and profited by it; and what Reason is given? It's that they may give an Account to Christ with Joy of their Success, such as Christ himself gives to the Father, *John 17. 8. I have given them the Words thou gavest me, and they have received them.* And this is a Minister of Christ his Account with Joy: But on the other Hand, when a Faithful Minister of Christ hath this Account to make, *Lord, I preached to this People, the Word which thou gavest me; but they either would not bear it, or those that did, for the most part received it not.* This is an Account with Grief, that *Israel* is not gathered, the Word of the Lord contemned, and it is *ἀλυστέον*, unprofitable for you; i. e. It will not turn to advantage, but have a sad Issue and Effect. These *ἡγούμενοι*, v. 7 are those who have spoken the Word of the Lord to them, and therefore Preaching Elders. He saith *Remember them*, i. e. Honour, Obey them, and Submit unto them, for Words of Sense in Scripture carry with them

them suitable Affections and Actions. This Argument is so strong a Bulwark to our Assertion, that if there were no other it would secure it from being stormed by all the Force of Hell.

Argu. 3. The Third Argument is taken From the Names and Titles given unto the Elders of particular Churches, all speaking Rule and Government placed in them.

1. They are called *πρεσβυτεροι τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, the Elders of the Church, Acts 20. 17. and elsewhere, a Word taken from the Elders or Rulers of the Synagogue, or rather from the 70 Elders that made up a *Sanhedrin*, all which were Ruling and Governing Elders.

2. *ἐπίσκοποι*, Heb. 13. 7, 17. *Duces, Leaders and Conductors* unto others; a Word taken from Leaders and Commanders in an Army, where as its their place to Lead and Command, so the Peoples to follow and obey: The Apostle asserts Elders to be both these, *οἱ 7.* to be followed as Leaders; so the Words *Βεβόησαν ἰναυ τῆς διαγωγῆς*, the End of their Conversation (I rather take the Word to mean *Tendency to escape*; the Word being used but once more, 1 Cor. 10. 13. and there it's rendred *Evasio, Escape*: 'One saith, It's an Allusion to one compassed about with Thieves 'making his Escape.) So that it is their Conversation in their Escape, from the many Temptations, they are invironed round about with; and *ἠμῶν*, imitate their Faith, i. e. Follow them as they follow Christ. And in the 17th. Verse, you see he insists upon the Obeying of them, and submitting

ting to them in the Lord in all the Duties of Obedience and Subjection enjoined by Christ, and brought to you by them in the Name and Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Verse 24. Salute all that have the Rule over you;* where the same Word is used: So that it's no less than thrice used in this Chapter. Now what kind of Commanders are those, that have no Command, or Rulers who have no Rule?

3. *unknown Overseers*, we have shewed before that the Presbyters, yea, the Teaching Elders of *Ephesus* were governing Overseers, not meer Beholders of the Church and Fraternity but Governors thereof.

4. *Pastors, Shepherds, rulers*, so Christ is called the Chief Shepherd, I suppose these Contradictors will allow Christ to be such a Pastor as to rule and govern the Church; if so, why not Subordinate Shepherds; for *Ratio Nominis in natura rei non Gradus*. A Shepherd is therefore called so, because of his Rule and Government of a Flock, tho' it be but a small Flock, and he be subject to a Superior Shepherd.

5. *Pilots*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. *Pilots*, for the Word there for *Government*, is taken from the Government of a Ship by a Pilot; as Mr. *Robinson* well observes, 'All that are in it tho' the King himself, is under the Pilot's Government. But that is a fine Pilot, that is under the Conduct and Command of the Mariners.'

6. They are *Stewards*: *A Bishop must be blameless as a Steward of God, &c. &c. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 12.* Now a Steward tho' he be not Lord

Lord of all, yet he is a Governor over the House; so was *Eliexer* over *Abraham's* House, *Gen. 15. 2.* and all Affairs and Persons govern'd by him that were put under his Charge; a Steward without a Command in his Sphere, and in the Name of his Master, and by his Authority, is but an Agent without Hands, and a Messenger without Legs.

7. *Πρωτεύων*, *Rom. 12. 8.* the Word signifieth a President from *πρωτεύω*, and is rendred there well, a Ruler, as *πρωτεύω*, *1 Tim. 5. 17.* and *πρωτεύων*, is rendred *Those that are set over others*; so Elders there, are such as are over the Brethren in the Lord, and this being over others is not only being above them but having Rule over them, and to prove this unanswerably. See *1 Tim. 3. 4.* where one of the Qualifications of a Bishop is, That he must be one that *Ruleth well his own House*; and is not this a Ruling Presidentship? The Word is *πρωτεύων*, so *Ver. 12.* One, that is a Ruling President of his own Children, there's the same Word again. I pray, Doth a Child rule the Father, or a Father the Child; for it's added, *Having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity*: And thus argues, from the less to the greater, that if a Man cannot rule his own House, how can he take Care of the House of God? i. e. by way of Rule and Government: I could argue from the High Title of Angel, that our Lord Jesus Christ vouchsafes to give to the Pastor of each of the Seven Churches, and spoken to him as his Great Ambassador and Messenger; each Epistle directed to the Angel or Pastor (tho' I know some will not have a single Officer there intended,

tended, but a consistorial Assembly which I see not the least Ground for) who as Chief in Rule and Government, so principal in declaring the Mind and Will of Christ concerning the Church, over which he was set: which particular Account of Christ's Will, was manifested in each Epistle to each Church, directed to the Pastor as Christ's Angel, to acquaint the Church with the Mind and Will of Christ.

4th. *Argu.* from 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well, be accounted worthy of double Honour, especially those that Labour in the Word:* If this place give not a Proof of Ruling Non-preaching Elders, (for there's a plain *Antithesis* between them and Elders that *Labour in the Word and Doctrine* by Office) it gives a plain Proof of the Ruling Power of Preaching Elders. And,

If all Elders that rule are worthy of double Honour, and more especially the Preaching Elder; then the Preaching Elder hath Ruling Power, and much more deserves it than any other; the Spirit of God having given him the Preference *In Foro Ecclesie*: That *οὐνοκράτωρ*, is truly translated *Rulers*, hath been sufficiently evinced before; the *Vulgar* and *Syriack*, and other *Versions* carry the same Sense with the Text *Qui bene præsunt*, who are good Ruling Presidents in the Church are worthy of double Honour, especially the Preaching Elders.

5. I might argue from the *First Gospel-Church*, Christ erected it with Rule and Government,
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and if it be said the Apostles were Extraordinary Rulers of Churches, I say so in the first Planting, but the Succeeding Elders must be Rulers in an Ordinary Way, Rule is the Essence of Eldership, and continues in it, the Way of being made so is Accidental; degrees make no specifick difference.

6th. *Argu.* If the Great Beauty and Excellency of the Church of *Moses's* Building as a Servant, lay in a well ordered *Regimen* and Government, how much more doth the Beauty and Excellency of a Church of the New Testament lye in this; for Christ is counted *Worthy of more Honour than Moses*; being not only Lord of that Church, but more Honourable as *A Son in his own House, whose House are we*; Heb. 3. 5, 9. If the Faithfulness of *Moses* appeared in this as a Servant or Steward, in building of a well-governed House, then Christ must not be less faithful in making a House without Government.

7. I may argue *Ex Absurdis.*

1. If the Church be not ruled and governed by the Elders, then it's either an *Anarchy*, or govern'd by some others; those that deny the Elders rule, will not say it's an *Anarchy*, but that it hath some Rule some where; then I say, if it must have it from others and not from the Elders, then it must be in the Fraternity or Sisterhood; they will say, the Sisterhood are excluded from Exercising Authority in the Church, and therefore in the Fraternity, the Brethren as such are the sole Rulers, and the Officers as such no Rulers, tho' Co-rulers with

with the Brethren as such. Now then the Rulers and Ruled are *Relata consensientia ex mutua Affectione*, destroy one and you destroy the other : We must consider then, who by this *Hypothesis* are the Rulers and the Ruled ; the Brethren are the Rulers, and the Officers as Brethren, and the poor Women are the Ruled ; the Brethren the Commanders in chief, and the Officers as Officers and Women the Obedient Subjects, See but what a Hotchpotch and Medley these Ungovernable Persons will make, the plain Truth is, that tho' a Congregational Church is the best Fabrick in the World, in the Exercise of the Faith and Order of Christ, yet being undermined by Anarchical and Leveling Principles it soon becomes a Heap of Rubbish, verifying that Old Proverb, *Corruptio Optimi est pessima*.

2. It will follow that Ministerial Church-Officers are only Administrators, that are not concerned as such, in Ruling and Managing the Body Corporate, but only as to exercise a particular Function for the Service of the Corporation, and for their own Livelyhood ; as for Example, a Mason, Carpenter, Bricklayer is chosen to be the Company's Mason, Carpenter, &c. this or that Man is chosen to work to the Company before another, and to exercise his Trade in and for their Service only, and have this Privilege before others to take their Mony ; This is to lay the Ministry under the highest Reproach, to make it a meer Trade and Mercenary Employment.

3. This is under the Mask of some Congrega-
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tional Principles to give up the main to the Adversary, who say, it's a meer Democracy, or rather Anarchy, without Order, Justice or Honour, that all are Governors and none governed, many headed and divided in Heart, as their own proud Hearts and the great Enemy shall move them, what Comfort can any Wise Understanding Minister, or Christian ever expect in such a Congregation.

4. They must be necessitated to choose Occasional Officers for Rule every time they meet, for Nature, Common Sence and Experience shews, that if a Multitude meet together upon any Occasion, they are all Speakers and no Hearers; nothing but Distraction and Confusion unless they choose a Chairman, *Pro hic & nunc*, to rule, govern, and keep Order in the Assembly, and what is this, but a Ruler of the Assembly? So that if Pastors be not Standing Rulers, then the Fraternity may choose a Ruler out of the Assembly for that time and at any other time, and the Pastor must sit by: And if so, why not Occasional Administrators too, as the *Anabaptists* do, and some others do little better who send to their Neighbouring Corporation, to borrow their Servant and Workman for a Jobb or two, their own being dead or out of the way; these Principles will subvert all particular Church Relation, and bring in Administrators General, or else Occasional Officers, at the Will of the Fraternity, both which are most absurd, Antiministerial and Antiecclesiastical.

By this time, Sir, you see as I suppose, that
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Capt. Bowler's Book may be easily answered, and hath not such Strength in it as you suggested, and that you begin to see your Mistake, in Asserting that he who maintains a Ministerial Rule and Government in a Congregational Church, doth subvert the Principles upon which it is built. And I could tell you (if I should not in so doing exceed the Bounds of a Letter,) that all Considering Men and Learned, that have wrote for Congregational Practice which I have seen, have asserted it; such as Mr. Robinson, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Hooker, Mr. Norton, and I might quote their Words for Proof of it. But I know you are in pain for our Defence against the great Attack of this Vaunting Champion, C. B. who asserts, *That a Ministerial Executive Power derived from, and lodg'd by the Church in the Officers, is to declare, pronounce, and execute the Juridical Determinations of the Church.*

Ans. The Officers execute the Power of Christ, which they do not derive from the Church any more than the Nature of any Ordinance is derived from the Church; whatever is in the Church is not derived from it: For Example, The Sacraments are in the Church, but their Sacramental Nature is not from it, but derived from Christ; an Officer is in the Church and chosen by the Church, yet the Nature of his Office, his Authority, and Business in this Relation is from Christ. A Mayor is chosen by the Commonalty of a Corporation, but his Right to his place upon their Choice comes from the King by Charter, and his Authority is from the King,

and all his Judicature proceeds in the King's Name; *There is no Obedience belonging to them they have no Rule and Government*; this he audaciously avers, in Contradiction to plain Places of Scripture, which he shams at his pleasure, by his illiterate Glosses and Interpretations, impudently imposing upon the less Intelligent Reader, telling him. *There's no need of Sticking to the Letter of our Translation*, and then will pretend to criticise on the Grammar of the Greek Text and refute our Translation, wherein he hath committed such Errors in Grammar and Sense, that if the Captain as great a Scholar as he pretends, had been a Scholar in any of the Schools, and produced to the Master such a piece of Learning, he would deservedly have been punished for it; for herein are abundance of Faults. 1. His Abuse of Grammar. 2. His Sauciness, to undertake to Correct our Learned Translators. 3. In playing the Pope, in imposing his Interpretation; and dispensing with departing from the Literal and True Sense of Scripture. 4. For Abusing Scripture in turning it into Nonsense, even in plain Places easie to be understood, proving himself worse than those Unstable and Unlearned Ones, that wrest the hard Places not easie to be understood to their own Destruction; 2 Pet. 3. 16.

All the Power he allows to Pastors and Elders is 'besides Work and Business of Administration, to declare, and pronounce, and execute the Juridical Determinations of the Church; and the Place that he brings to prove it, Col. 4. 17. is *Nihil ad Rhombum*, the Church indeed

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doth try by hearing, as to Matter of Fact as a Jury doth, but the Juridical Determination is Christ's, and the Elder is not only to declare, so every particular may declare; but to pronounce the Sentence of Absolution or Condemnation *Authoritative* in the Name of Christ, the Church hath a Liberty of Judgment, so far as to find a Person upon Trial guilty or not, as to Matter of Fact, in which Trial the *Forum Ecclesie* is under the Rule and Management of the Elders; and upon the Churches Judgment concerning the Person or Thing; the Elders Province is, to give Judgment upon the Person, according to the Juridical Determination of Christ; that which belongs to a Free Society is that a Person accused should be tried by his Peers or Fraternity as to his Guilt or Innocency, yet their Judgment doth not condemn him, but it's the Sentence of the Judge, that *Virtute Officij* pronounceth the Denunciation of the King in his Law; In a Word, this Man's Meaning is, the Brethren sit upon the Bench, must reign as Kings without the Elders; and the Pastor or Elders are but *Precones Curie*, *The Ecclesiastical Court-Cryers*. He tells us, they may be honoured as Chief Brethren, *i. e.* Esteemed as such, but how so? it's not usual to honour *Cryers* so much, they take any inferior Fellow for it, that hath a wide Mouth, and can say after the Clerk; and it's reckoned the meanest Place in Court, therefore far inferior to them that sit on the Bench.

He saith, He acknowledgeth they are 1. To have *Countenance*, so should the Court-Cryer;

it's strange if the Court should not countenance their meanest Servant : He allows them *Maintenance*, this is due to the Court-Cryer, or the Company's Bricklayer ; the meanest Labourer is worthy of his Hire. *Honour and Preference for the Work sake* ; where lyes the Honour and Preference, before whom are they preferred ? before them that sit on the Bench is the Cryer of the Court honoured and preferred ? because of his publishing and declaring to the World the Acts and Determinations of the Court ; they are honoured as a Skilful Carpenter with a place of Service to the Company, and is valued and esteemed by every one, for his Honesty and Skill in doing his Work. So their Pastor is one that they honour, because he is one of the Fraternity that preacheth better than others of the Fraternity ; and therefore they make him the Church Preacher, but not its Ruler ; *For (he saith) as to the Scriptures applied to the Case of Obedience to Elders, there seems no necessity of keeping to the Letter of our Translation.* No sure, here our New Translator is fain to new vamp Places of Scripture ; that they may not tread upon his Toes too hard, or rather trip up his Heels : There are two Places of Scripture, that he takes for Grant do signifie only Fraternal Honour and Preference, or he allows us to take them and make what we can of them ; 1 Tim. 5. 17. and 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. and yet he sees the Word Rule is expressly in one, the *Elders that rule well*, *καὶ οἱ ποιῶντες*, and in the other place *πορεύουσι*, *Set over you* ; we shewed the necessary Signification of the Words against all Contradiction, from 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5, 10. He should in these places

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ces have corrected the Translations or yielded the Point ; for the Apostle asserts Rule and Government to belong to Preaching Elders in both, and in the last he adds *υποταξάμενοι*, Those that are set over you in Rule and *Admonish* you, and do not both these necessarily require the Churches Obedience? I know not for what Reason he should thus slip them over, unless it were that they are too hot for his Fingers, in respect of the hard Words in them, that he could not pretend to pearse ; so he leaves the

Reader to believe by an implicit Faith, that *Ruling*, *Setting over*, and *Admonishing others*, doth not intend either *Rule* in the

As *υποταξάμενοι* per *Crates* for *υποταξάμενοι*, and that by *Syne.* and *Ion.* for *υποταξάμενοι*, part. preter. of *υποταξάμενοι*.

Presbyters, or Obedience in them that are under them, in Diametrical Opposition to the Texts of Scripture. Now the Places of Scripture, whose Translation he wou'd not have us to adhere too strictly to, but to take his instead thereof ; are as follow. *Rom. 11. 13. I magnifie my Office* ; this he saith, he spake as an Apostle of the *Gentiles* ; what then ? It's *Δακρυα* that he sticks at. For he saith, *this Service and Employment was very great* ; but he had more than meer Work and Service, as an Apostle, therefore his Office was in that Ruling Power, which he had as an Apostle over all the Churches ; and suppose he was a Preacher only, doth it not import *Command* ? Doth not the Gospel preached hold forth *Command* in the Name of Christ, and require Obedience thereunto ? Could the Man,

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or can any of his Admirers have the Impudence to assert, that the Apostle's Ministry, or *Nauplia* was not commanding and requiring Obedience in the Hearts and Lives of them that hear it, *Nauplia*, is a General Word for Service, either that which is totally Obediential, Inferior, or that which is of a Superior Nature, as a Magistrate or Minister's Office, there is no Place of Rule or Government in Church or State, but it is an Office of Work and Service for and over the Charge or Trust, committed to the Person that bears it *Rom. 13. 4.*

The next Place is 2 *Cor. 10. 8.* *Boast of our Authority, and this might be peculiar to Paul by Virtue of his Extraordinary Commission or Authority:* Suppose that, and then it doth import a Ministerial Authority, for his Apostolick was so and called for Obedience; but by his favour the Text tells us, that he speaks of such an Authority which was for Edification, and if then an Authority for Edification, was necessary for the Churches, so it is now. — *But it may be here rendred as in many other places License or Priviledge.* By what Rule? for we know otherwise that Words of diverse Significations must be rendred in that, which agrees with the apparent Drift and Design of the Place in the very Text or Context. *Exeunt, Power with Authority, Luke 10. 19. Mat 10. Mat. 11. 22. Mat. 7. 29. Heb. 13. 17. mides, Obey them that have the Rule over you; (he saith) the same Word is in many other places rendred Perswade; as Acts 26. 26, 28. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Gal. 1. 10. Acts*

21. 14. We will examine the Truth of this Assertion, *Here it need not signifie more.* We will try whether it doth or no; this Man finding *πεισιν* in the Text, he takes it to signifie the same with the Active *πεισιν*; and here Mr. *Irenaeus* would needs shew himself a Learned Critick, and cries *Victoria*, as if now he had gained the Point (I find these Illiterate Men will cry down all Learning, for the most part as Antichristian, till their Itch of being admired of Men as ignorant as themselves moves, and then out come all the Scraps of *Latin* and *Greek* they have got together. and Woe be to *Priscian's* Head that's broke without Mercy) *πεισιν* is *Persuadeo*, but *πεισιναι* is *Pateo* or *Persuadeor*; for *To be persuaded* is the same Import as *To obey*; as for Example, *Luke 16. 31.* *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, πεισθησιν, i. e. Will not be Obedient to the Word, tho' one arise from the dead.* It is false, that the *Passive* as it's in the Text is or can be rendred *To persuade*, Active; but it's rendred *I am persuaded*; *Acts 26. 26.* and it's as false, what he saith of *πεισιναι*, *Ver. 28.* for that's Active and Actively rendred, governing an *Accusative Case*; Likewise *2 Cor. 5. 11.* it is Active therefore not the Word here; that of *Acts 21. 14.* is Passive, *Gen. part. pres. posit. Absolute, He not Being persuaded, i. e. Yielding to, or Obeying their Perswasion*; therefore against him, that of *Gal. 1. 10.* is Active, therefore nothing to the purpose. Now take this Grammar Rule about *πεισιν* and *πεισιναι*; *πεισιν* is Active governing an *Accusa. Case* after it, and signi-

signifies according to *Steph.* *Persuadeo*, *Suadeo*, *Alicio*. Now in our Text the Word cannot signify *Persuade* Actively, for it's Passive and hath no *Accu. Case* after it; therefore our Author is herein very false in what he avers; it may be, it will be pretended, he will have the Word rendered Passively, Behold what Nonsense then will the Text be, *Be persuaded to the Rulers*, &c. But now take one Rule more, *wisdom* Passive is sometimes a *Nester Passive Absolutely*, and so governs no *Case* after it; as in *Luke* 16. 31. *Acts* 26. 26; and there it signifies *Persuadeo*, and in other Texts, and therefore our Translators have rightly rendered it; but where *wisdom* is put *Acquisitively*, and governs a *Dative Case* after, it signifies always *Parco*, *Obey*; or else if it were to be translated *Persuadeo*, the Interpretation would be Nonsense: Hence our Translators could translate the Word no otherwise than they have done, *Obey them that have the Rule over you*; and so you may see it, *Gal.* 3. 1. & 5. 7. where the Word is *Passive*, put *Acquisitively* as here; *Who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the Truth*; *Cap. B.* would render it, *Who hath bewitched you, that you should not persuade the Truth*? Is not this pretty Stuff? Now that none may Object that our Translators are singular, *Beza*, the *Vulgar*, the *Syriac*, the *Ethiop.* and *Arabick*, all render this Word by *Obedite* or *Parce*.

In the next Place, let us see how the Capt acquits himself in his Critical Encounter of the Word *τοῖς ἡγουμένοις*, which He or the Printer hath wrote false.

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He saith, *This is no Term of Empire and Domi-
 nion, but of Preference*; Phil. 2. 3. Acts 15. 22.
 Our Discourse is not of Empires and Dominion,
 tho' we shall shew that such is expressed by it. He
 saith, It's only a Term of *Preference*, not of a Cap-
 tain, but of a Fellow-Soldier, a File-Leader, or
 Elder Brother, and no more; so that he that some
 call the *Pastor*, is but our *Brother* such an One:
 He saith, *ἡμιούμενος* signifies nothing but an *Esteemed*
Person which in reality is our Equal; and the
 Apostle reports to the *Philippians*, they should
ἡμιούμενοι, be *Esteeming*, and *Preferring* each other
above themselves; Phil. 2. Now see how this Man
 is run into another Blunder, *ἡμιούμενος* hath an *Active*
Signification, is *Deponent*, and the *Particip.* is there
 used for *Preferring* or *Esteeming* another; but
ἡμιούμενος is in other places a *Noun Appellative*, and
 signifies *Dux Primarius præsens præsens*. So *Steph.*
 and hath a *Passive* Signification, the *Person*
esteemed set in Place of Rule and Dignity of Go-
 vernment over others; the Apostle exhorting the
Philippians to Unanimity, and against Contention,
 which ariseth mostly from Pride and Self-con-
 ceitedness; he tells them, *That in all Humility each*
one should prefer (in his own Mind) *his Brother*
above himself. So this here spoken is but an Ar-
 gument of a Lowly Mind, he doth not make his
 Brother *ἡμιούμενος*. The Word as a *Noun Appella-
 tive* is *Every Captain, Ruler or Governor*. See
Steph. and all the Versions
 of this Text of Heb. 13.
Acts 15. 22. where the Bre-
 thren sent to *Antioch* with

In the *Particip.* 2 *Pet.*
 2. 13. *ἡμιούμενος*,
Esteeming is *pleasure*.

Paul

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Pant are called *ἀρχαὶ ἡγεμῶνες*, the Word is a Participle used as an Adjective of *ἡγεμῶν*, *Ducor*, *estimo*, Valued and Esteemed Men, as may be spoken of every good Man known to be so; but none in Scripture are *ἡγεμῶνες*, substantively taken but those that are set over others in Rule or Government, and that we may not leave any thing without sufficient Proof, Jesus Christ himself is called *ἡγεμῶν*, — Out of thee shall go forth a Governor, who shall rule (or *ποιμαίνει*, Feed and Rule as a Shepherd) my People Israel. Now Sir I pray, doth our Captain speak true or no; that this Word signifies nothing but a little *Mental Esteem* of another, but no Empire and Dominion. Is it not the Design of the Spirit of God to acquaint us, how Great the Lord Jesus should be, even above the Kings of the Earth; yea, as the Chief Shepherd and Pastor, from *Mic. 5. 2.* from whence it is, that his Under Shepherds are in our Text called *ἡγεμῶν*. See also *Acts 7. 10.* *Pharaoh set Joseph over all Egypt, ἡγεμῶν*. What think you now? Is not the Captain false, in saying it signifies not *Empire* and *Dominion*.

Now Sir observe, that our Captain hath spent all his Powder against this Text; he can go no further, he meets with a *ne plus Ultra*, or, a Word that's to him *Noli me tangere*; after he hath drild the Text into mere Nonsense, he is fain to Face about and say, as you were, for here is a Bulwark in his way, that he dare not Attack, *ἡγεμῶν*, a Word that's no where else in the New Testament; and therefore he could not find a Place of Scripture to abuse that he might

might pretend to the Ignorant, that he had sham'd the whole Text. Now it must be persuaded the chief Brethren to be subject to them, and the chief Brethren are the Rulers : For how could this Word so positively Express the relation of such as are in subjection, and the other Part of the Text not Express the Correlation ; you see our Captain is not gone off with flying Colours, but runs away Sneekingly from ~~the~~ its pitty (if he were alive) but that he should have a Sword broke over his Head, for a pitiful Ecclesiastical Cavalier.

Well, one would think he could not have the Impudence to speak once more ! But he hath, and a sober Christian can think no other, but that failing of his intended Defeat of this Text he became half Mad (as indeed he was often in the daring Opposition, he would make to the most Glorious Truths of the Gospel) telling us, *that the Text need not signify more, and why ? Because there's no Object of Obedience but Christ*, p. 60. 1. When he sees himself overthrown by a Text, he tells us, it need not signify any more than what he will have it, i. e. that it speaks one thing, and need signify nothing but what's diametrically Opposite to it and Nonsense ; and the reason why it must be so, is because the Fifth Commandment is Expunged by his Authority : I wonder whether this Man ever made his Parents the Object of any Obedience, or whether ever he had any Command over Soldiers under him, and whether he was only a File Leader or an esteemed Brother ;

Brother ; he doth not here Express so much Religion (considering his Natural Wit) as a Cunning Deceiver would have done, who would have said, there's no true Obedience unto Man, but what is performed in Obedience to Christ ; But for a Man at one Blow to dash out one of the Commandments, is horrid Insolency, as if Christ had not made in the Law and Gospel, *Eph. 6. 1. 2. 3, 6.* Parents, Masters, Magistrates, Ministers and all that God hath in his Word set over us, Objects of Obedience ; but he saw it necessary for a Leveller to renounce the Fifth Commandment.

Next he Argues from the Abuse that hath been of Ecclesiastical Authority, and the *magnificent Pile the Pontifical structure is raised to*, therefore a Church ought to have no Rule and Government, &c. Will any Rational Man take this to be forcible Reasoning, from the Abuse of a thing to a Negation of the Use of it, because Meat is Eat by some to Gluttony, and others Drink to Drunkenness, must none Eat or Drink ? because some Men have bin Tyrants and Oppressors ; must there be no Kings or Magistrates ? but this is not worth taking Notice of.

Again he Argues, that Christ hath provided all things Necessary for the *Being and well Being of his Church, which is to have Right and Authority in themselves to Edifie one another, to receive in Members, to cast out, and to choose their own Officers.* Now he should assume, but Christ hath provided for the Being, and well Being of his Churches

Churches, without appointing any Rule and Government over them, and this is absolutely False; for Christ hath Instituted their Being, that he may be Glorified and they Edified by Rule and Government; that they may have Government, and Edification the same way, *Eph. 4.* For there can be no Edification of a Church, but in a way of Obedience and Subjection to Christ in his Ministerial Appointments; the Doctrine is Christ's, & all Ordinances Administred in his Name, by those he hath given Authority to Administer them; receiving Baptism and the Lords Supper are Acts of Obedience and Administration, Acts of Authority and Command in the Name of Christ, and not of the Church; *Take, Eat,* a plain Command.

A Church is not altogether destitute of the means of Edification, before they have Chosen and Ordained Officers; but have Priviledge to Exercise and Dispence the Word of God for mutual Edification: No more than any Honest Company of Neighbouring Christians have to come together and Pray, and Read the Scriptures, Repeat Sermons, or Exhort one another from some plain and practical Places of Scripture, and this is a Duty Incumbent on them as Christians before they are in Church Fellowship; therefore much more after, especially if they have no higher means of Edification, which Christ intended for their well being in Church Fellowship. Before a Church hath Officers, they cannot have all things needful for their Edification, as they cannot have the Administration of the Seals, nor Authoritative

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authoritative Dispensation of the Word in an Inorganic Church, the Fraternity cannot Labour in the Word, & Doctrine per modum Officii, i. e. Authoritative, nor Administer the Sacraments, Norton ag. Apol. There is something indeed they do which lies founded in the Law of Nature, but not particularized by any Institution any further than this, that no Institution of Christ *violates any Law of Nature*; they may receive additional Members to themselves; how? By the same Reason as they Congregated at first, for they are a Body *in fieri*; It was their Duty as believing Christians to *Congregate federally into a Body*, and not limited to one Day for taking in, but may still *increase as Members* offer. Again, they may cast out a Corrupt Member incorrigible, but this is *ex necessitate Naturæ*, every thing that hath Being, is bound to preserve its Being by all Ways and Means; in Self-Defence a private Man may take up a Sword and kill another *se Defendendo*, but it is no Act of Government, nor makes no Rule that a Man may take away anothers Life at his Pleasure, out of a Place of Judicature, without *judicial Proceedings & Rule*; for orderly Proceeding, and Regular cannot be taken from Extraordinary and Necessitous Cases, such Cases in which Self-Preservation or Fraternal Necessities are the Guides; Fraternal Actions meerly, and Judicial Actions are too vastly different. In the Cases mentioned, as in the casting out a scandalous Brother, or of an offending Elder, there being none other in the Church, it will not reach the Case, for the Captain's design

sign is to cast out *Rule and Obedience* out of the Church: Now I say, no Act of a Society of Men can be done Regularly without it, *Ex. gr.* a scandalous Brother comes to be dealt with, in a Church without Ruling Officers; how will they proceed in any Order like Men, if they set not up one *pro hic & nunc*, to keep Order and Rules in the Multitude, and go before them in Examination and Trial? And what is it that they look for, but that each one Obey the Brother delegated, and that the offending Brother Hear, Obey, and Submit unto the Admonitions or Sentence denounced by him in the Name of Christ? Herein they actually Manifest their *defect of Elders*, and Justify the Wisdom of Christ, in Instituting standing Officers to go before the Church, to Direct, Guide, and Govern in all the Affairs thereof.

Now as to Choice of Officers: It is a *Privilege*, not a *ruling Power*, (as the Captain himself says when it will serve his turn) to choose their own Officers; and as it is a Privilege to Choose their own Officers, so it is their *Duty* to the Lord Jesus, and of Faithfulness to themselves; but no *Act of Government* and Ruling Power, any other than that which is Requisite in every Matter of Right, that every Man should Rule himself, according to the best Judgment he can make. That the Keys are given to the Church, is not to be Understood in a limited Sense to the Fraternity, but to the Church considered indefinitely; so that the Keys both of stated Administration and Government, are Purchased by

Christ, and given unto every Church in giving Officers and Ordinances to them ; and till they have them, they are in an imperfect unedifying Condition, for they are *in fieri* ; and then, the Liberty and Privilege lodged in them *quatenus a Church, Eligendi*, must necessarily Imply that they want that which is required for to Answer the great End of their being a Select Body, viz. *Edification*. Now suppose the Keys are given to a Church as such, and therefore to a Church Unorganized ; It must be Understood that its as a Privilege, not as a Power. 2. That the Propriety is not in them, but in Christ. And, 3. That they are not to Exercise them, but in Christ's Way, so far as they have any Use of them ; its only upon present Emergency and Necessity. 4. That there are some, that they can have no Use of in their meer Fraternal State. 5. The next End for which they have to do with them, is but as a Duty and Privilege in an ordinary way, to bring them into Christ's appointed Way and Means of Administration ; they are not to take the Keys and put them their in Pocket, and Use them as they please. 6. That the Elders being Ordained, are Christ's in his Church, and all exercise of Power as well as Office it self, is from the Lord Jesus Christ ; and what is done in Christ's Name in the Church with its Knowledge and Consent, is done by the Church ; a Man is received into the Church, and by it ; cast out of the Church, and by it ; tho' the Governing Part in so doing belong to the Officers ; yea, there is in the doing and finishing these, that which is peculiar to his Office Relation, which

which is more than merely Voting with the Fraternity as a Brother. 1. He as an Officer Governs the whole Proceeding in Trial and Examination. 2. He lays before the Church the Mind and Will of Christ in that Case. 3. He finding the Mind of the Church as to Persons or Actions, doth then *Virtute Officii* proceed to receive or reject in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

He saith, then the Elder hath a *Negative* Voice in the Church; I say it follows not: for his Vote is but single as another Brother's; but his Office carries more in it, for he is *Virtute Officii*, authoritatively to lay the Mind of Christ before them as to the Matter in Hand and the Duty, and if they will not obey, the Sin is theirs and not his, he having manifested his Dissent by Vote as a Brother; and shewn their Duty as an Elder, and required their Obedience in the Name of Christ.

To insist particularly on all the Incongruities, Impertinencies and Misapplications of Scripture in this Book, would call for more Paper than I intend in a Letter Form; but, because you seem to have an high Opinion of it, I will remark a little more.

Cap. 8. is about Office and Officers, and there he tells us, what Office is Affirmatively and Negatively. It signifies *Business, Service, Employment not State and Dignity*; nor is an Officer a Term of *Empire or Dominion*, but one *Ordained and Appointed by a Society or Church, to do some Work or Business in and amongst themselves*; which every Member is not qualified for, nor obliged to perform. This Account is very Lame and False, 1. Lame,

because instead of telling us what it is, he tells us what it signifies or comprehends, or is implied in it ; a Word may signify many things that it is not used for, as a Pastor signifies a Shepherd of *Brutish Sheep*, but us'd for a Shepherd to a Flock of *Christ's Sheep*. A Presbyter or Elder may be taken for an Old Man, but used for an Officer of the Church. 1. Its false, that it signifies Business and Employment, it's no where applyed to meer Business, or a single Trade ; as a Taylor hath a Trade and Business, is not therefore an Officer ; a Man is a Shooe-maker to make Shooes, this makes him not an Officer in the Parish : In a Word, Business is not the proper Adjunct or Form of Office, tho' every Office hath Business, yet every Business is not an Office ; a Carpenter or Mason builds a good Hall for the Company, and is employed by them so to do ; they pay him and commend him for his Work's sake ; doth this make him any Officer to the Company ? Not so much as a Beadle : Or a Man as being a Skilful Workman and Member of a Church, builds a good Meeting-House for the Church he is of, and gives them the House when he hath done ; this is a great Business and Kindness, and the Church hath great Reason to Love, and Honour him for his Workmanship and Kindness ; but doth it make him either Elder or Deacon ? Every one may see hereby the Folly of this Assertion. A Minister is honoured not only for his Work's sake, but for that Authority by which he performs it. A Magistrate or Mayor of a Corporation, tho' he be a very Good, Honest and Skilful Shopkeeper or Merchant, he is honoured no more than others,

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but because he is a Mayor or Magistrate, he is tho' a Man of Great Business, honoured for his Office of Rule and Government: *Paul*, saith he, *Magnifies his Office*, Rom. 11. 13. What was that *Διακονία*, this, saith the Captain, was only *Service and Employment*. This is false by the Letter of the Text, it was his Apostleship to the Gentiles; see the Words, *I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am an Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnifie my Office*. I pray, what doth the Apostle speak of here, his Office of Apostleship to the Gentiles, or his Business of Labour in it: Every Child can understand, that it's his Apostleship he speaks of. Nor is an Officer a Term of Empire and Dominion, I would fain know, whether a King be not an Officer to the Realm, Rom. 13. If you say no, then tell me, whether the Kingship of Christ to his Church be not an Office of his? Whether *Joseph* set over the King's House, and all *Egypt* had not Dominion? It were endless to lay open the many gross and absurd Assertions of this Man, in this applauded Book of his. All that he saith about *Διακονία* are Trifles, it's plain the Spirit of God useth it for Office Service (tho' the Word signifie any Service with Charge) and as some Services are inferior to others, so all, inferior as well as superior, are Set over the Charge committed to them. A Magistrate is *Διουκν*, Rom. 13. the Apostles were such, as appears *Acts* 2. and Rom. 11. So inferior Officers as a Deacon, tho' no Ruling Officer of the Church, yet in his serving of Tables he is set over that Charge. A Scavenger, one of the lowest Offices in a Parish, is set

over and hath the Government of that Charge ; as the Steward of an Household, Clerk of a Market, &c. So then, an Officer is one that's appointed, or chosen to the Oversight and Government of some Charge of Persons or Things, or both, according to the Degree of it, whereof he is to give an Account unto him that appointed him, in respect of his Faithfulness in discharging the said Trust. *Heb. 3. 2.*

He saith, *There's no State or Dignity in an Officer*, I thought there had been some Dignity in respect of the Workmanship, that he need not be ashamed of : So the Captain hath allowed a Pastor to be an Honorary Brother, one of the Chief Brethren, that is better qualified for Church Service than the rest. Would this Man allow the Lord Jesus Christ any State or Dignity ? as *Prophet, Priest* and *King* to his Church : These Principles of his do strike at all Christ's Offices : as for Elders of Churches he makes them no better than Church Pensioners ; such a he makes *Phoebe* to be, *Rom. 16. 1.* in being *ἡγουμένη* to the Church of *Cenchrea*, he saith a *Pensioner*. But let such Men know, that Christ calls all Offices in his Church, Ministrations and Services to him, not because they have not Dignity, but because all the Dignity he hath placed in the Church, even that which hath most of Rule therein, is for his Service, in the Benefit and Edification of the Church ; as the Scripture speaks *Rom. 13. 4.* of the Civil Magistrate, *He is ὑπάτος, the Minister of God to thee for Good.*

He makes a great Harangue of receiving Members

bers by the Church, wherein he still carries along his fallacious way of deceiving his Undiscerning Reader ; as if they that assert a Ruling Power in Pastors, did deny a Power of Judgment in Approving or Disapproving such as offer themselves ; and when he talks of the Church, he intends the Fraternity in distinction from the Eldership, when indeed the Fraternity in distinct Consideration from the Elders are no more the Church, than the Elders in distinct Consideration from the Brethren ; and there is yet one considerable part of the Church, which is the Sisterhood ; therefore the Fraternity are not the Church, but the Elders, Fraternity and Sisterhood are the Church, each acting in their Place in Obedience to Christ according to his Rules and Appointment : The Fraternity assembling *per se* for Government, are as well a Consistory, as Elders acting *per se*, without the Presence of the rest of the Church ; I deny not, but Elders and Brethren may meet apart, to consult the best ways for managing Matters of Difficulty, but nothing can be regularly a Church Act, but what is done *In Foro totius Ecclesiae* ; I mean not, that the Absence of a particular Person [willfully or carelessly, should be any Hindrance in this Case, unless there be some special Reason for it He saith, *Mat. 18. 17. Tell the Church, is not meant the Elders or Sanhedrin, &c.* No it is not, neither is meant the Fraternity or Sisterhood. He tells us, the Apostle 1 Cor. 5. 4. blames the whole Church, and requires the whole Church to meet, &c. Therefore there was more than the Fraternity, yea, it strongly

ly argues the Elders were to be there, to pronounce that Solemn Sentence in the Name of the Lord, by Office Power from him: For the Apostle did not bid them, excommunicate the Incestuous Person in his Name, or in the Name of the Church, but in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And here lies the great Fallacy in this Man's Discourse, that he would suggest that what is done Authoritatively by the Elders in the Name of Christ, is not done by the Church, tho' with their Consent and Concurrence, which is false; for tho' the Mouth speak, or Hands act, the Man speaks or acts, so in the Church. 1 Cor. 12.

He tells us what Dr. O. complains of, 'The sinful Neglect of the Churches, by which their Order and Government was invaded in the Primitive Times, when the Members began to think they had no Concern in the Church, — but followed wholly the Direction of their Guides, who are apt to usurp Authority, when they found the People negligent.'

What is this to his Purpose? there's Extreame on both Hands, a sinful Neglect or Oseitancy in the Church Members is to be condemned, and so is all Usurpation in Elders, but as Elders have and often do, take more on themselves than Christ hath given them, and are therein condemnabable; so Brethren taking more upon them than Christ hath given them, are as guilty of Usurpation. Let me tell you what the Doctor saith too in his Book of the *Nature of Churches*, p. 137. 'The Government of the Church in the Judgment of some, is absolutely Democratical or Popular; they

' they judge that all Church Power and Author-
 ' rity is seated and settled in the People, — and
 ' they look at Elders and Ministers only as Ser-
 ' vants of the Church, not only materially in the
 ' Duties they perform and finally for Edification,
 ' *but formally also as acting the Authority of the Church*
 ' *by a meer Delegation, and not any of their own de-*
 ' *rived directly from Christ by virtue of his Law and*
 ' *Institution.* Hence they do appoint Persons occasi-
 ' onally among themselves, to administer the
 ' Lord's Supper, or any other Solemn Office of
 ' Worship: On this Principle, I see no need of El-
 ' ders at all. This is our Author's Character, who
 saith, p. 113. of 1 Cor. 5. 14. it was an Act
 of the Church in the Name of the Lord Jesus,
 pronounced by an Elder, or whom they shall
 depute.

The Doctor hath here fully described the Prin-
 ciple, which this Man labours so much to esta-
 blish, *viz.* That Officers have not Office Power
 from Jesus Christ, that they are only *Præcones*
 of the Acts of the Church by virtue of Delega-
 tion from it; if so, it will necessarily follow that
 they may choose their Officers, as they have Oc-
 casion of such Publication, or of any Administra-
 tion, which any Brother may do. In Answer
 to an Objection, 1 Cor. 5. 4. wherein it's express
 that the Sentence of Excommunication was pro-
 nounced in the Name of Christ; he would infer,
 that tho' the Church doth their Acts in the Name
 of Christ, yet *the Officers do not*, but in the Name
 of the Church; for they are *Subordinata*, Christ, the
 Church, Officers; so that what the Officers do is
 re-

remotely in the Name of Christ, but not immediately, and then he blirts out a Scrap of Logick, *Subordinata non repugnantur* ; but I must tell him *Subordinata* as such are *Opposita Disparata*, & *Mediata*, & *Immediata* are *Contraria* in his Logick *Repugnantia* ; but to pass by his Logick, as having no more in it than his Philology ; he saith, *All Power being from Christ, every Act of Discipline and Government, must be done in the Name of Christ.* p. 112. Very good, then the Performers of that Act of Discipline and Government, must do it in the Name of Christ ; as for Example, when the Church of *Corinth* did excommunicate the Incestuous Person, who can suppose but the Pastor or Elder did pronounce this Sentence in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, *I deliver thee unto Satan, and in the Name of the Lord Jesus, not in the Name of the Church* : It's enough, to shew the Church acts in the Name of Christ, when every Officer and Member moves in his Orb and Sphere in the Name of Christ. Every Member in a Natural Body acts for and by the whole Body, tho' each Member doth what the Body can't do with another ; a Man talks with his Tongue but can't with his Foot ; sees with his Eye, not with his Ear ; and yet the *seeing Eye and hearing Ear is as immediately from the Lord, as the whole Man* : But this Man will have a Church a Body Corporate to act in the Name of Christ, but the Officers in the Name of the Church ; as if the Tongue should say, *I speak in the Name of the Body* ; but my Body stands under another Name. What doth the Man mean by Acts of Discipline and Government, where

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where all are Governours, and none Governed? He exploded all Obedience out of the Church before. I must profess, I never saw a Book fuller of Inconsistencies in my Life; if it were worth while to shew them all, it would fill a Volume, besides the palpable Falshood, and nasty Fallacies and Sophisms; as in the next place. *But the Act*, is not the Officers exclusive of the Church? Doth any Members pretend to Act Exclusive of the Body? Do they Act any other than their own Faculty *in* and *with* the Body? The Tongue, the Hand, the Eye, Act their own Faculties, but not Exclusive of the Body. So in Corporations, the Mayor Acts his part as such, each Alderman his, &c. but all are Acts of the Corporation, Court, or of whatever the Association is.

According to this Man, there is no *Fellow* should be Hang'd; if he be Indicted for Robbing, or for Murder, he might plead thus: My Hand indeed did it, but it was exclusive of my Body: *Therefore I am not Guilty.*

But the Act done is a Declaring the Determination of the Officers and Brethren.

[Why Officers? Whereas he allows them to be but *Workmen*, who Act therein no further than by their single Votes as Brethren; but we say they Act as Brethren and Officers.]

So that the Execution of any Act of Discipline and Government, is nothing but a Declaration of what the Church does in the Name, i. e. by the Authority and Institution of Christ. Here he denys all Judicial Proceeding whatever, and in all Courts of Judicature, as tho' a Cryer of the Court were the great Executioner of the Justice thereof; or not so

so much, for every By-stander can declare what
 the Court hath done, or read the Sentence which
 the Law determines against such an Offence: but
 there is a Judicial Denunciation thereof in the
 Name of the King, Explicit or Implicit, which
 the Judge doth *Virtute Officii*, and none in Court
 can do it but himself, or one that hath Authority
 and Office as he hath. Such Judgment and Pro-
 ceeding in a Church by the Elders thereof, is
 according to the Institution of Christ, and is a
 part of the Officers Power received from
 Christ, and Exerted in his Name. ---- *For if the
 Church receive in or cast out a Member, or choose an
 Officer, such Acts of the Church must be declared in
 the Name of Christ, but not as an Act of the Officer
 that declares it, but as the Act of the Church.* To
 Declare, i. e. Denounce or Pronounce, judici-
 ally in the Name of Christ, is always an Execu-
 tive Act of the Person whose Office it is to pre-
 side in the Hearing and Examination of the
 Cause; for if Brethren as such Act in Christ's
 Name in their Sphere, why not Officers in theirs.
 We deny not, that it's an Act of the Church, so
 far as Consent and Approbation, but that it is
 an *Office Act of the Church*, is a gross Absurdity,
 for the Body is not One Member, or hath only
 one Faculty, but many: So the Church is not the
 Officer, no more than the Officers *per se* are the
 Church. See 1 Cor. 12. 14, 15, 16, 21, &c.
 What a Man doth with his Hand, is an Act of
 the Man; but he struck or took with his Hand,
 not with his Ear or Foot. What he alledgeth of
 choosing Officers is Idle, for choosing indeed is an
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Act of Liberty, but none of Rule, but a proof that that Body is without Rule, Sheep without a Shepherd till by choice they have one. Christ hath made Election the Churches Priviledge in respect of Freedom, and the ordinary Way and Mean, since the Apostles Times, of comming by Officers; yet this they do as an Ordinance in the Name of Christ, as every Christian Act ought to be done, as an Act of Obedience to Christ, and in his Name, such as Hearing the Word, and Receiving the Sacraments. But Choosing is no Act of Government in the Name of Christ: There's none to be Govern'd in it but their own Judgment, & Christ would not have any Act done in his Name under a Notion that it is what he never made it to be. Again, these Men would suggest, because Churches Unorganiz'd can receive in and cast out, whil'st they are *in Fieri*, therefore they are to Govern when *in Facto*. But it's a wrong Deduction, as if the Carpenter of a Ship and his Men in Building a Ship, have the Liberty and Power of taking a good Piece of Timber, and throwing away a bad; therefore when the Ship is made, he must be the Master thereof. We have shew'd what is done in that kind is *ex natura, & necessitatis gratia*, where *Salus Ecclesiae est Suprema Lex*, and is done more by fraternal Combination *ad preservandum totum*, than in any Judicial way: For before there be a *Forum* constituted, there is no Judicial Act. Besides the Church, before Officers chosen, are in a very Indigent Condition: They have not the Church Officers virtually in themselves, neither

ther do those Officers they choose receive *virtutem Officii* from them. If they have *virtutem Eligendi*, I would know from whom, and how? they'll say, *Immediately from Christ*: Why have not the Officers the same? They have *virtutem Officii*, as immediately from Christ, (*i. e. Executionis Officii & Officium ipsum*) as the Church hath *Eligendi ad Officium*; every Ordinance of Christ in it giving and bestowing the Blessing thereof according to the Nature thereof: As in Preaching the Word in the Name of Christ, (not in the Name of the Church) the Authority of Christ comes in the Word upon the Heart, and then it brings the Heart into Subjection to the Gospel, the Obedience of Faith; the Grace of God makes the greatest Appearance in the Church by the Authoritative Exercise thereof in the Ministry, and the Obediential Subjection thereto in the People.

It's false, *That ever Church Power was lodged Radically in the People*, pag. 119. It was never Radically in any but Christ, who is the Root of *David*; or *Virtually*, for their Choice could not make an Officer, if the Virtue were not in Christ. You tell me, *That setting aside this Disputable Point about Office, the Book hath many Indubitable Truths in it about Churches*; I must say, Hold there Friend, not as he hath stated and used them, for he has made them Squintey'd. You would think they look one way, and they look another; for all that is Truth is perverted to a wrong End, to Undermine Churches, to Wrest Scriptures, and to Deceive the Simple. If it were so, did you ever know any
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Considerable Error or Heresy prevail in the
 World, but it came with the Mask of Truth,
 and Arm'd with the pretended Piety of him that
 Vented it. Moreover. there is scarcely a Chap-
 ter that labours not under false Assertions in Di-
 vinity; it is not hard to shew how he abuseth
 the word *ברית*; how false he is in Denying the
 Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, *Gen.*
17. (called by *Steven*, *Acts 7.* the *Covenant of*
Circumcision) to be a Church Covenant, and
 without Stipulation, for therefore it's called the
Covenant of Circumcision, because *Abraham*, by
 Circumcision, stipulated thereto: He makes all
 the Church Covenants to be no more than A-
 greements of Association one to another in the
 Old and New Testament; not Obligations to
 God and one another. And in particular you
 may see how False he is in the Church Covenant
 with God in the Old Testament, expressly con-
 trary to the Letter of Scripture, which he would
 audaciously tread upon when it would not serve
 his turn as that of *Deut. 29. 10, 11, 12.* He
 saith, It was not a Stipulation unto God, when
 the Word is, *Thou standest this Day before the*
Lord, &c. --- That thou should enter into Covenant
with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the
Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day, &c. 2. In
 saying none stipulated but those of understanding,
 whereas all the Congregation stood solemnly be-
 fore the Lord, Men, Women and Little Ones,
 &c. *ויקרא* Your Infants, and it was requisite
 it should be so, for immediately after this Cove-
 nant in the Land of *Moab*, they were to be cir-
 cumcised

cumcised ; Infants as well as grown Persons, in which they Stipulated to the Covenant ; and therefore in this Notion of his he lays a Foundation for Anabaptism, of which Principle he gives a great Suspicion that he was by this Book. He makes filthy confused Work about Law and Gospel. He saith, *Israel was not a Congregational Church, till they came into the Wilderiness* ; and the Reasons he gives will as well serve to unchurch them in *Babylon*. He makes a most slight Business of Qualification of Members for Church Fellowship, the answering only this Question, *Dost thou beleieve on the Lord Jesus Christ* ? Abusing the Eunuch's Case to his purpose, whereas the Eunuch was a Believer before, and Profelite to the Faith of the Jewish Church, and therefore Exercised in searching the Scripture about the *Messias*, which the Jewish Doctrine taught him was to come, and *Philip* was sent of God to inform him in this Particular, that He was come, and who He was. Besides, there were many more Words undoubtedly past, for he Preached unto him Jesus. Moreover, *Philip* was an extraordinary Person, and did what he did by extraordinary Instinct and Direction from God ; and those Cases are not our Rules to go by in ordinary. As he hath endeavour'd to Rob the Churches of all the Office Power of the Elders ; so he endeavours to Rob them of all due Qualifications, by inveighing against Churches and neighbouring Pastors for making Inspection (from the due Charity of Communion of Churches) into the Qualifications and necessary Endowments,

yea into the Principles of Faith, and Order of such as any destitute Church is enclin'd to choose, and would make as if every Company of honest-minded People, but just entred into the Faith of the Gospel, were able enough to judge: It's true, if they were Heady and Proud, as our Author is, and run on to choose a Man by a Sermon or two, that they are affected with, Hand over Head; who can hinder them? But if they are taught of God, they will advice with Churches and Neighbouring Ministers, who may inspect his Learning and Principles, that they may have a Man faithful to Christ, able to divide the Word of God aright, and not make such Havock of it as our Author here doth: And what ever such Men pretend of the Spirit, I am sure Nonsense, Abuse of the Scriptures, False Latin and Greek, is not from the Spirit of God; and what ever he saith, they that expect the Countenance and Encouragement of Neighbours, should endeavour to give them Thanks for their Care of them, to give them the best Advice they can in so great a Concern. But our Author makes nothing of the People's Choosing without Advice: *For he saith, if the Person proves Bad, it's their Misfortune, not their Crime.* See, he talks like a Heathen, and against all Morality, that if People choose a Person rashly, without Advice, it is not their Fault, but Fortune hath not favour'd them. He tells us, *Nothing can dissolve the Pastors Relation but Necessity, as want of competent Maintenance, or Unhealthfulness of the Place.* It is strange there should be no greater or more weighty

weighty Reasons! Methinks he might have added this, viz. Nonconcurrence with, or Non-submission to the Capt. his Canon of Church Discipline. Sir, You are pleas'd to tell me, That these Canons of his have stagger'd a great many in your Country, even Pastors themselves; some of which *profess* themselves *Bowlets* roundly. These must be such as are Half Pastors, that are contented with their Work and good Wages; (never having had the Black Cow to tread on their Toes) and as for their Office, they are willing the Fraternity should take it upon those Terms. But let such Men know, that for all their Cunning, (at the long run) they may meet with the Event the Foolish Rustick did in the Fable, who work'd so hard to cut down the Bough he stood upon.

Now Sir, I must tell you, I am weary of this Dirty Work, to rake in so nasty a Kennel as this Book is; were it not that you tell me how much it's likely to prevail, and I finding you did a little lean to it, I thought it not amiss to write these things to satisfy your selves, and if you please your Neighbours; and as a Character of the Author, I send you this concluding Verse, which would have fitted him Living, and may be a suitable Epitaph on his Tomb-stone:

Diruit Edificat mutat Quadrata rotundis.

F I N I S.

